

NEW PARKS NEWS

Volume 11/ Winter 2001-2002

A Publication of the Arlington Parks & Recreation Department
717 W. Main Street; P.O. Box 231; Arlington, Texas 76004-0231 - 817.459.5474

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARKS, RECREATION, & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN BEGINS!

In January 2002, the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department will begin the process of developing a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to provide a vision, establish standards and guide the development of Arlington's park system over the next ten years.

... the Master Plan gives overall guidance for future decisions regarding capital improvements, ...

The first step will be a city-wide phone survey to gain insight into the public's perception of existing services and opportunities for system

improvements. Since the Master Plan gives overall guidance for future decisions regarding capital improvements, the document should balance the assessment of existing needs with opportunities for addressing current trends. Over the course of approximately six months, goals and objectives will be reviewed, information will be gathered and analyzed, and recommendations will be developed.

The master plan process will include several public meetings as well as input from user interest organizations and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The first public meetings will focus on goals, objectives and opportunities that the plan should address. After accumulating input from the survey, public meetings, and established standards, a comprehensive needs list will be created. The final step will be the prioritization of these needs, which will evolve into a set of draft recommendations. Additional public meetings will then be held to review the draft recommendations. Once the recommendations are finalized, staff will submit the plan for adoption by the Parks and Recreation Board and City Council.

For more information, please contact Gordon Robertson, Assistant Director of Planning, at 817.459.5492.



JOHNSON CREEK TRAIL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Construction has begun on the long-awaited Johnson Creek Trail linking Randol Mill to Division. The project is partially funded by a 1994 grant from the Texas Department of Transportation. "These projects sometimes take time to develop, but when they finally fall into place, they are certainly worth the effort," boasts new Assistant Parks Director Gordon Robertson. "This is an important piece of the Johnson Creek trail system." Since 1994, the City has focused on floodplain acquisition and the development of plans/specifications for the \$2.7 million project. The 12-foot wide multi-use trail will tie into an existing system at Randol Mill on the west side of Johnson Creek. It crosses Sanford at-grade, but below street level at Division. "The volume of vehicular traffic on Division requires a grade separated crossing," Robertson reported, "and the culverts there are large enough for bicycles." The trail is scheduled to open in the fall of 2002.



For more information, please contact John Fain at 817.459.5478.



RIVER LEGACY PARKS MASTER PLAN REVISIONS

It has been several years since the Parks Department and River Legacy Foundation have discussed the vision for River Legacy, but those efforts are now under way. "We have so many new issues to consider," Parks Director Pete Jamieson reports, "including the Parks and Wildlife grant at Collins Street, the possible acquisition of Bird's Fort, the final disposition of the Village Creek Drying Beds, and the linkage to the proposed Northwest Sports Center. We also have to look at how to address parking issues and what kinds of uses are appropriate for the site. When the first phase of River Legacy was completed in 1989, we never envisioned some of the things we are seeing now. So it's important to step back and take another look at how we want to evolve." Over the next several months, city and Foundation staff will work with consultant landscape architect Jim Richards to develop goals/objectives and guiding principles for development. For more information, please contact John Fain at 817.459.5478.



HOWARD MOORE PARK POOL PROJECT

In March of 2001, the Arlington City Council authorized the expenditure of bonds to provide a shallow water play pool in Howard Moore Park to replace the neighborhood pool.

Throughout the summer and into the early fall, construction documents were completed and the project was bid for construction. Bids were received in late October and exceeded the allocated budget. After consideration and research, the bids were rejected and the project is being redesigned to bring it back into budget. A thorough review process by internal staff and external participants will be conducted so that customer needs are still achieved.

Demolition of the existing facility will occur independently and should be complete in early spring. The current schedule to re-advertise the project is late spring, with construction to begin in the summer of 2002. The project is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2003. For more information, please contact James Fish at 817-459-5489.



Current Park Construction Projects

The Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center began construction in the fall and is proceeding well in spite of some early delays. Significant construction activity has taken place, concentrating on the support buildings, pools, parking and infrastructure. It is scheduled to open at the beginning of the 2002 summer swim season.

Jake Langston Park construction also began in the late fall. "Rough grading and parking lot construction is underway," reports De'Onna Garner. The park is scheduled to be available for public use in the spring of 2002.

The Arlington Tennis Center expansion project will add eight additional courts to the facility. The project should be complete late this winter. The added courts will greatly expand the opportunity for staff to host tournaments.

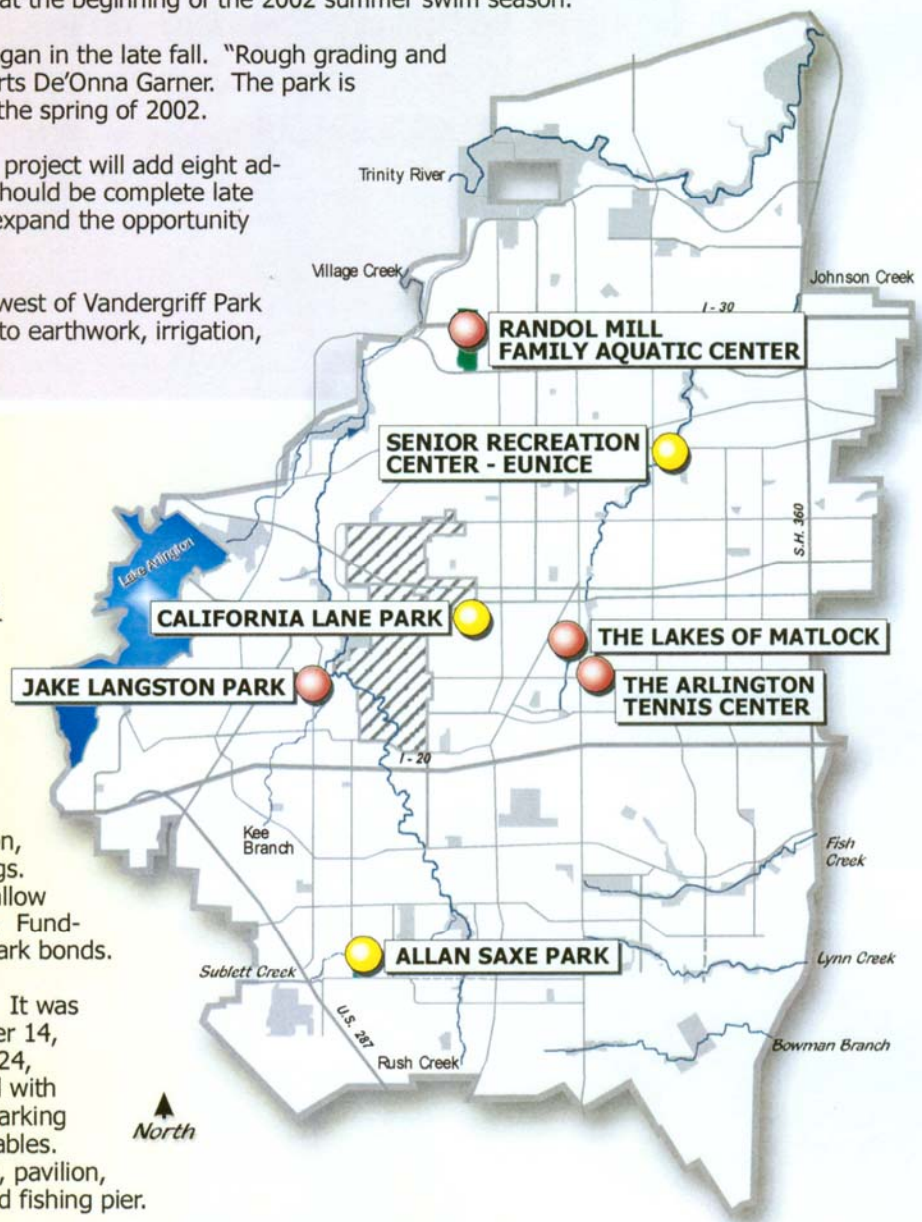
The Lakes of Matlock project is located west of Vandergriff Park on Johnson Creek. Construction is limited to earthwork, irrigation, planting, and a water feature.

Park Openings

Senior Recreation Center Eunice was reopened for public use in late November 2001. The opening followed an extensive renovation of the existing facility, including a 3400 square foot addition. Primary components included were natural lighting throughout the facility, a kitchen update, meeting areas and restroom expansion. Other interior renovations included wall finishes, carpeting and heating/air conditioning upgrades. The interior was redesigned to maximize the available space for meetings, instruction, facility programs and large group gatherings. Two of the large rooms can be divided to allow diversity in programming and rental space. Funding for the renovation was through 1997 park bonds.

Allan Saxe Park opened in August 2001. It was acquired by the City of Arlington on October 14, 1986 and dedicated to Allan Saxe on April 24, 1990. Phase I of development was funded with Park Fees and includes a tot playground, parking lot, multi-purpose trail and several picnic tables. Future construction will include a restroom, pavilion, playground, nature & multipurpose trail and fishing pier.

California Lane Park - This neighborhood park is scheduled to open in the winter of 2002. Development was funded through a \$500,000 Texas Parks and Wildlife grant, park bonds and park fees. Although historical records are vague, it is believed that California Lane acquired its name sometime after 1849 when early residents of Johnson Station used the road to travel west to the California gold fields. Documents also indicate it was part of an early stagecoach line that linked the settlement to forts in west Texas and ultimately California. Park improvements include a pond, playground, picnic areas, practice fields, bike/hike trail, basketball court, picnic shelter, horseshoes and a water-play feature.



New Assistant Director for Planning Hired in October

Gordon Robertson, previously a Senior Project Manager with the Lower Colorado River Authority in Austin, Texas, began work as the new Assistant Director of Planning for the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department on October 29, 2001. Gordon received his B.A. from Southern Methodist University in 1990 and his Masters Degree in Planning from U.T. - Austin in 1995.